

Following the Bush administration's poor response to the 2005 gulf coast hurricanes, the new Congress has pledged to strengthen disaster planning and response, and we are following through here today. The RECOVER Act will improve the Small Business Administration's disaster response plans and assess its technology, telecommunications and personnel in advance.

In the event of another hurricane or natural disaster, small business owners will face costs of starting up again, so this act increases the funds available for disaster loans from \$1.5 to \$3 million. And importantly for the hard-working folks like those in my district in the Tampa Bay area, small business owners will no longer be required to pledge their homes as collateral for business loans less than \$100,000.

The act also requires the SBA to improve coordination with State and local authorities and establishes a disaster relief corps of 1,000 trained individuals.

So, Mr. Speaker, I strongly urge approval of this rule and the RECOVER Act so that our country is better prepared for hurricane season and the swift recovery of our communities and small businesses.

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to yield 4 minutes to my good friend, the gentleman from Georgia, Dr. GINGREY.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I can certainly understand my former colleagues on the Rules Committee, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS), the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DIAZ-BALART), the gentlelady from Florida (Ms. CASTOR) being in favor of this rule and this underlying bill.

But I rise, Mr. Speaker, in strong opposition to the underlying legislation, H.R. 1361, the RECOVER Act. This legislation is bad fiscal policy. It increases the cost to America's taxpayers of providing disaster assistance, while increasing the probability that the Federal Government will lose money to default losses.

It was Huey Long, the long-time Governor and Senator from Louisiana, the gulf coast, the Kingfish, as he was known, who said, "I can frighten or buy 99 out of every 100 men."

Mr. Speaker, I am not suggesting that my Democratic colleagues are trying to buy votes with this bill. But I do know that we need to closely examine the money our government spends to ensure that it is spent responsibly.

We have worked hard to fund the redevelopment of the gulf coast, committing more than \$110 billion of Federal resources. That includes \$4.7 billion to FEMA to remove debris and repair and rebuild public infrastructure and buildings; \$17 billion from HUD for Community Development Block Grants, the largest housing recovery program in United States history; \$6 billion for the Corps of Engineers to rebuild and restore levees so that we can rebuild

below sea level; \$16.1 billion paid out in national flood insurance claims, \$1 billion for Health and Human Services to cover all of Louisiana's health care costs. And the list, Mr. Speaker, goes on and on.

There are right ways and wrong ways to fund redevelopment. This Congress has delivered \$14 billion in incentives to spur private business investment and economic development to create jobs, another \$600 million in Gulf Opportunity Zone tax credits to the region, with an additional \$400 million expected to be awarded this fall to encourage more business investment. But today we are debating a bill which would harm small business across the Nation by giving away money that will never, and I repeat, that will never get repaid.

Mr. Speaker, provisions in title II of this bill would allow gulf businesses whose application for a disaster loan has been denied, to then receive \$100,000 in grant money. And if a business has already received a loan, this bill will make sure that same business can also get a grant, and in the process, they will make certain that the grant money is not used to repay the loan.

So, yes, Mr. Speaker, you heard right. If the SBA decides your business is not viable enough for a loan, Congress is going to come in and just give you the money. What is more, now you can get paid twice for the same disaster.

Mr. Speaker, the sad fact is, this bill will hurt small businesses across the country. When the SBA makes a loan and that loan is repaid, the SBA loans that money to another business, and the cycle repeats itself. But by removing the repayment part of this cycle and requiring the SBA to send a \$100,000 grant to those businesses who do not qualify for a disaster loan in the first place, we are diluting the resources of the SBA and hindering its ability to extend loans to businesses in other parts of the country, businesses fully capable of repaying them.

Mr. Speaker, my Democratic colleagues are ignoring any semblance of restraint by treating our Treasury as a bottomless pit. In raising the risk of unrecoverable default losses, by giving away free money, it would certainly seem they are doing their level best to prove Huey Long's words to be true.

I urge my colleagues, vote against the rule and vote against the underlying bill.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I would like to inquire of the gentleman from Florida, Mr. Speaker, if he has any remaining speakers. I am the last speaker for this side.

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. I have no more speakers.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Then I will reserve my time until the gentleman has closed for his side and yielded back his time.

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, we have no further speakers and yield back.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, disasters in this country are not limited to hurricanes or the Southeast. As I was saying yesterday in the Rules Committee, the chairwoman had storms in her district earlier this week, and there is massive drought going on in parts of this country. All of these are disasters and all of these have major SBA implications.

I have lived, and continue to live, in disaster-prone areas, like so many others in Congress and in this country. If our failures of the past have taught us anything, it is that we can no longer be response oriented when it comes to disasters.

Mitigation and planning saves money, saves time, and most importantly, saves lives.

The RECOVER Act creates a comprehensive and universal plan at the SBA for disaster response. It is the first step on this important path to improving the Federal Government's response to disasters.

I urge a "yes" vote on the rule, the previous question, and the underlying legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time and move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on adoption of the resolution.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will now put each question on which further proceedings were postponed, in the following order:

Ordering the previous question on H. Res. 301;

Adoption of H. Res. 301, if requested;

The motion to suspend the rules and adopt H. Res. 306.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

□ 1340

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1257, SHAREHOLDER VOTE ON EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on ordering the previous question on House Resolution 301, on which the yeas and nays are ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 226, nays 199, not voting 8, as follows: